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LETTER

TO THE

FRINEDS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA,

ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A

LITERARY AND THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Widely scattered as we are over this province, among other sections of the great Christian family, and with multitudes who cannot be considered as belonging to it at all, we are in danger of losing sight of those sacred ties by which we are bound together in Christian fellowship, and of our obligations to maintain and extend that system of doctrine and ecclesiastical order embraced by us, as we trust, with enlightened minds and believing hearts. To counteract a forgetfulness from which so many injurious consequences must flow, study to remember that you have brought with you into this land nothing more valuable than the faith of Christ, the only sure basis of social order and national greatness, apart from which this country, where we have sought a home, can never become a quiet and desirable habitation; our best solace amidst the sorrows of a present evil world, and our only sure guide to the joys of immortality. Whether, therefore, we consider the personal blessings that flow from the faith of our fathers, or the benefits which it may diffuse over the community, we are sacredly bound to maintain and disseminate it, and to take care that it be faithfully transmitted to coming generations.

Our attention has often turned, with painful solicitude, to your dispersion over this extended and thinly peopled region, on account of the difficulty of maintaining a close ecclesiastical union, and the comparative feebleness of our efforts in carrying out those combined benevolent enterprizes in which, as a church, we engage. Our ministers can rarely enjoy each other's fellowship and counsel, except for a few days in each year, at our meetings of Synod; and even then, from various causes, there are many of our brethren whom we have not seen for years in succession. Since such circumstances must impair the unity and strength of our mere ecclesiastical organization, we need to be the more firmly attached to the standards of our doctrine and worship, that from these we may imbibe a spirit of concord, which will animate us within our respective spheres, with zeal and faithfulness, in the same common and Christian labours.

We have long been convinced, on the most satisfactory grounds, that Presbyterians constituted one of the largest Protestant denominations in Canada. Emigration from Scotland

was directed, from an early period, towards this colony, and has continued until the present day to supply a large proportion of our settlers. These, numerously reinforced from the Presbyterian counties of Ireland, had swelled our ranks, as we believed, to a majority. Nor did we overlook in our estimate the descendants of a goodly number of those who took refuge on this side of the St. Lawrence after the separation of the United States from the mother country. The general results of the religious census of the past year, shew that in naming 100,000 as the Presbyterian population of the two provinces, we have not overstated our numbers (*Note A).

Such a large portion of the inhabitants, not the least enterprising, intelligent, and wealthy, and conscientiously devoted to their religious creed, cannot but exert a powerful influence on the general well being; but that this influence may be well directed and truly beneficial, the most strenuous efforts must be employed to counteract what is unfavorable in our present circumstances, to prevent our people from sinking in the scale of intelligence from want of the best means of education, and from departing from the faith through the want of those ordinances which are divinely appointed to preserve us in the right way. Happy will it be, should we be so guided by wisdom and the fear of God, as to preserve and brighten the good name we have inherited from our fathers.

The establishment of a college has at different times, for several years past, engaged the attention of our church courts. In the discussions that have arisen on this subject, it has often been urged that the secular branches of learning might be obtained at the Royal University in Toronto, which has been endowed at the public charge, and that it would be enough to connect with it a theological faculty for the training of such young men as may devote themselves to the holy ministry; that by adopting this scheme we should press less heavily on the liberality of our people. It would doubtless have been much more gratifying to us, and perhaps more conducive to the educational well-being of the community had it been expedient and safe to follow such a course.—We are quite aware that institutions designed for the higher branches of learning must be framed on a large and expensive scale. We are, moreover, convinced that as educated young men must in the course of life often meet on the same arena to deliberate and act for the

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common good, a similar discipline in the same collegiate halls, under the same able instructors, might form habits and cement friendships, favorable to the peaceful and prosperous management of public affairs, and might even ultimately contribute to the removal of those unhappy differences that disfigure protestantism—a consummation that all good men devoutly wish. But we have been driven from this scheme by the grasping exclusiveness of a party (favored hitherto by the executive authorities in the province,) which would keep in their own hands, and manifestly for the low purpose of sectarian power and proselytism, an institution designed for the benefit of all. Having waited long in vain for ameliorations, which we had just reason to expect, we have resolved at length upon a course where we shall not meet with such obstacles, a course which will not diminish but strengthen our claim for an equitable share of such funds as have been, or shall be, appropriated by the state, for the advancement of general education.

We are well entitled to affirm that the ministers of the Synod of Canada have always felt a deep and solemn sense of their obligation to watch over your spiritual well-being, and to take part in every question directly or remotely affecting it. One of the most important of these undoubtedly is the education of our youth, from whom may be drawn pastors, to watch over you in the Lord, and teachers who may be qualified to conduct your schools. We have not entered on any general course of action in reference to this object at an earlier period, because we were fearful that we did not possess the means of undertaking it on a suitable scale, and because we still clung to the hope, that in our present condition of infancy and feebleness, we might be able, through the countenance and aid of the Parent Church, to obtain a sufficient number of ministers from Scotland to supply our destitute congregations. We clung tenaciously to this hope: we know that such ministers enjoy advantages in the course of their preparation for the sacred office, far superior to any that they can here enjoy, that they would be greatly preferred by settlers from the mother country, and their assistance was most desirable in laying the foundation of a church in this land, which we cannot but think is destined to be distinguished in the future history of nations. But with deep sorrow, we have recorded our disappointed hopes, and the small success which has attended our efforts to relieve the spiritual destitution of our people. We have employed every means in our power to procure for destitute congregations, ministers from the Parent Church, and in a few cases we have succeeded. But for several years it has been apparent, that the duty of training young men for the ministry must devolve upon ourselves, and so decided were their convictions in the last meeting of Synod, that it was resolved to proceed immediately in the establishment of a Literary and Theolo-

gical College, the draft of an act of incorporation was adopted, and the Commission was instructed to carry out the views of the Synod in this matter. Accordingly at the last meeting of the Commission, it was resolved (*Note B.) to make an immediate appeal to the liberality of our people for the support of this projected institution, to request the General Assembly's committee to appoint the Principal and one Professor, to commence in November next, the department of instruction.

It is acknowledged that this is a small beginning; but as we do not intend to stop with the beginning, we feel no shame, and we offer no apology. We regard this commencement in no other light, than as a pledge, on the part of the founders, that they will not rest, until all the requisites of a complete course of education in literature and theology be secured. Following the universities of our native land as a model, we shall take up the pupil at the furthest point to which the district and grammar school has conducted him, and introduce him to those higher studies, that may qualify him for public and professional avocations—For this purpose we contemplate having separate chairs in the **FACULTY OF ARTS** for the Latin and Greek languages;—for Logic and Belles Lettres;—for Natural Philosophy and Mathematics;—for Metaphysics, Ethics, and Political Economy: and in the **FACULTY OF THEOLOGY** a chair of Divinity;—of Ecclesiastical History and Government;—and of Oriental and Biblical Literature. It may not be practicable for some years to carry this plan fully out with a separate professor for each of these departments. But with four professors and other assistants, it is believed, such a distribution of these branches may be made, as shall secure to the student a competent instruction in each. As our funds increase and the number of pupils may require, new professorships will be instituted, and greater facilities afforded by greater division of labor.

Commencing thus upon a small scale we shall escape the folly of outrunning our means upon the one hand, and on the other of creating an establishment beyond the actual wants of the community. We should esteem either of these a preposterous indiscretion, which would soon involve us in great embarrassments, and undermine that public confidence on which our success depends. Our method will therefore be to provide only for our present and actual wants, on a plan that will easily admit of enlargement with the growing wealth of the people and the demand for collegiate education. In this we follow in the footsteps of similar institutions in Britain. The University of Glasgow in 1450, began with one professor in theology, and three in philosophy. At the first foundation of the University of Edinburgh, only one professor was appointed, and he a minister of the city; nor was it until a considerable time had elapsed, that he received six coadjutors. Marischal College, Aberdeen, be-

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gan with a principal and two professors. And the University of Cambridge, since so celebrated, emerged from nothing in the twelfth century, under no more promising auspices than an abbot and three monks, who hired a *barn* in a convenient place for public lectures, and when a crowded auditory compelled them, they dispersed to suitable apartments in different quarters of the town. With such examples before us, we need not be discouraged by the smallness of our beginning, or the difficulties that seem to cross our path. Let us rather hope, that if our Canadian College should resemble those ancient and celebrated seats of learning, in the lowliness of its origin, it may hereafter rival them in the splendor of its career. Nor have we any cause to hide our heads on account of the means by which we propose to accomplish our object; the combined, extended contributions of our people. Those famous universities to which we have alluded, arose chiefly from private munificence. In a few instances they were enriched by royal bounty—but they have been much more indebted to the liberality of private individuals. The spacious college edifice in the Scottish Metropolis was commenced by private subscription, and altho' it has been liberally assisted from the public funds, the balance sheet may shew at its completion, that the private has exceeded the national subscription. These foundations shew what may be accomplished by the princely bequests of opulent individuals and families, in a nation where wealth has been for ages accumulating in the hands of the few. On this continent the spectacle of immeasurable inequality is not presented to us. In Canada, indeed, we cannot speak of wealth at all; we are poor; we are a people only beginning the world; and yet if we are animated with a right spirit, if we value that blessing after which we now aspire, we possess, though not the money, the means of attaining it. With us the multitude must accomplish, what has often been accomplished in Britain, by one nobleman. Let us, whatever be the disparity of our means, display a generous spirit, and success will crown our sacrifices and exertions.

The funds requisite to make even our proposed beginning of this institution must be ample. In conjecturing the support, that it might receive within the province, we have pleased ourselves with the hope that, from the tens of thousands, who professedly belong to our communion, contributions might be obtained on the following scale: say that

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| 50 persons may be found who would give £100 each | = £5000 |
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Add to this a stream of smaller sums, and the amount would enable us to begin on a scale suited to our present wants, and prospective

improvement. By making every subscription above five pounds payable in three annual instalments, the burden would be the less felt, and an equal benefit would be secured, as the proceeds would be available, nearly as they might be needed. When we consider the number of persons among us of bettered and improving circumstances, merchants, farmers, artizans, who are not indifferent to the cause of religion and education, we cannot fear that the subscriptions of even the highest classes in the above schedule will be difficult to realize, and by an extended and active agency the lower and more numerous contributions, might also be procured. Every child should be encouraged and enabled by the favor of their parents, to bring a stone for the erection of this fabric. Let even the hands of women prepare the drapery for the walls, and its columns and carvings be memorials of the dead.

The success of this undertaking, will very materially depend on our awakening a universal interest in its support; for those among us who can give largely are not numerous; and there are few who are not able to give something.— But even the most friendly and liberal do not usually come forward of their own accord to contribute to such objects; they must be sought out and solicited by the leading members of their own circle. To carry out such a system of universal solicitation, every thing will depend on the zeal and efficiency of local committees. Where congregations are formed, the Session and other influential members associated with them, will be the best committee.— Where congregations have not been organized, it may be requisite for two or more of the nearest ministers, to visit the people, to explain and recommend the object, to take the subscriptions of such as may be present, and to appoint local sub-committees to visit the absent and more remote, who, it may be expected, are willing to lend their aid. It is evident that this must prove a very laborious task to ministers, who are already over-burdened with their own particular charge. But unless it be undertaken and prosecuted with unwearied diligence, we shall come far short of what might otherwise be achieved. For it is not to be imagined that our present congregations are able to accomplish this work alone. Several of them are scarcely able to meet their own ordinary expenditure. Without, however, taking this into account, persuaded as we are, that no temporary congregational embarrassment will be urged as a plea for withholding support to a measure, involving the perpetuity and extension of the whole church, let it be remembered that the number of Presbyterians who do not enjoy the blessings of pastoral care, and who are not and cannot, in their present dispersed condition, be formed into congregations, must be much greater than those who are so favored. Few of these, since their settlement in the country, have been required to contribute in any way towards the support of religion; many of them

are able to do so; and that they are willing the numerous documents before our Presbyteries sufficiently declare. These scattered members of our communion must be visited by local committees, informed of the efforts in which we are now engaged to relieve that privation of sacred ordinances, under which they and their families are suffering, and solicited for their pecuniary aid. In many remote townships which the Presbyterian Missionary has never visited, there will be found those who possess the heart and the means too, to assist in this work. But their nearest neighbors—albeit the nearest be far away—owe them a visit of fraternal acknowledgment and entreaty. Might not such efforts send forth new life, evoke new power in the Presbyterian Body? Might not youths for the college, as well as money, be found among these remote and as yet unvisited brethren?—We entreat sessions and congregations to encourage their ministers to enter on these extended visitations, to submit to his absence for such time as may be necessary, to send with him in this work suitable coadjutors, persuaded they should not lose their reward, either from their missionary labor, or in that object of general and permanent utility, on account of which it has been undertaken.

While we rely with a cheering confidence on the liberal spirit with which this measure will be sustained, we ought not to indulge in the vain expectation, that we shall meet with no coldness, and encounter no rebuffs. Our agents in the general solicitation will come into contact with many members of the church, who have never in this country benefitted by the ministerial labors of the church. Some of these stung with disappointment, may be disinclined to assist us in the work. This feeling will doubtless, for the most part be soothed, by a simple statement of the cause of this apparent neglect. It is impossible, with the number of ministers we have at present on the field, to spread our pastoral care over its whole extent. Our ministers cannot, indeed, without neglecting their present charges, extend their labors. Their powers are limited; demands up to that limit are already made upon them; and if the regions beyond have not been gathered under their wing, it is only because their wing is too small to overspread them. When it is declared to such that one part of our design in this undertaking is to multiply religious instructors, that they and others in similar circumstances may be enabled with gratitude and joy, to say "now our eyes see our teachers," it may be hoped that even they will exceed in their liberality.

It is not one of the smallest misfortunes of Presbyterianism in this colony, that we have inherited from our fathers, some of the consequences of those divisions by which the parent church has been rent. The causes of the original secession, and of its swollen ranks in the present day, were entirely local, peculiar to the kingdom of Scotland, and had no existence be-

yond its territory. It will not be pretended that they ever had, or ever can have any existence here. Here, there can be no usurpation of lay-patrons, no intrusion of unacceptable ministers, no disputes about the power of the civil magistrate, for he exercises no power in ecclesiastical affairs, and claims none, no ground of offence in corporation oaths. Farther, we presume to say that no one can justly allege against us a sinful laxity in discipline, or carelessness in maintaining the standard of the church. What good reason, then, can be adduced for perpetuating these unhappy divisions on this continent? Are not the reasons for unity among us, agreeing, as we do, in every point of doctrine, worship, and government, cogent enough to hush every dissentient feeling that circumstances may have engendered in the home of our kindred? We ought not to perpetuate, then, divisions in Canada, for no better reason than that they existed in Scotland. They cannot be continued here, but to the extreme detriment of that cause which ought to be dear to us as our own life. A better spirit now prevails in "our own, our native land." Let us contemplate the progress of unity, ~~and~~ and humble ourselves before God, here below, ~~when~~ ~~no~~ real obstacles exist, except such as have their seat in the pride of the human heart—*we are not yet one*. We are still arrayed under distinct, though, we trust not, hostile banners. Oh, that the spirit of unity, which has of late achieved so signal a triumph in the return of a long separated tribe to Jerusalem, the mother of us all, might pursue us hither, and heal those rents which have so long exposed us to the derision of the enemy? We would hail it as an omen of these better days, did we behold every class of Presbyterians come forward promptly to the support of this projected institution, based on the principles of the common faith, and designed to raise up ministers for the service of one common altar. That many of those who in Scotland had gone out from the pale of the establishment will meet us in this spirit of brotherhood, we certainly know, and we shall thank God for these tokens of a movement originating with him who hath healing in his beams.

It is not unlikely that, appealing, as we do, for general support to the undertaking, we may hear an objection from some, that, as they never design that their sons should enjoy a university education, it cannot reasonably be expected that they should lend their aid to establish one. Few, it is hoped, will persevere in acting on so narrow and illiberal a principle: it is in direct opposition to every sentiment which good men cherish in regard to measures affecting the general well being. The philanthropic contribute to the maintenance of hospitals, though they never expect the remotest of their kindred to become inmates. In every civilized and Christian community, such institutions are necessary, and such burdens must be borne. In trying to supply individual advantage, however, in this and all Numerous co

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analogous instances, is comprehended in the general good. If contagion be not checked in its earlier stages, can any one tell who may be sufferer? Every educational institution is designed to dispel ignorance, to eradicate vice, an evil more destructive in its operation on communities than the most infectious diseases. Nor is their influence limited to the successive troops of young men who are instructed within their walls. These are soon diffused amidst the crowd, and become radiant centres in other spheres. In the legislature, the courts of law, in the pulpit, in every walk of life, the best educated will usually be the best instruments of promoting the general good. In truth, a low standard of learning among persons in the highest grades of society, and among professional men, can only be regarded as at once a national vice and a national calamity. This observation applies with peculiar force to an illiterate clergy. As a body, they come most frequently into contact with the popular mind; to them naturally belongs the superintendence of popular education; if they are unable to appreciate its value or to recommend its culture, or to display its effect, what can be looked to but a downward movement of the people to ignorance and barbarism? In connexion with this point, we may notice an advantage that would incidentally accrue to popular education, from exacting a lengthened literary preparation from all candidates to the holy ministry. Many of them might thus be led to devote some of the early years of their course to teaching; hence the guardians of our common schools might obtain a class of teachers of higher scholarship and better conduct; and the pupils of such as may hereafter rise to eminence by their talents and usefulness, may derive, throughout all their future life, many benign influences from their youthful preceptors. They will rise in feeling with the man, and be the better for having known him. Moreover, many trained in these institutions, may devote themselves permanently to the labors of education, and contribute to raise the standard of it in society. These high seminaries of learning ought not, therefore, to be viewed as designed for the benefit of the few only, and consequently cast on the liberality of the few. Every member of the

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thither in every form, and for years in vain. A solitary laborer now and then debarks on our shores, to testify to us that our spiritual destination is not forgotten by those who bear towards us a paternal regard, but he is immediately absorbed, without any apparent lessening of our wants. At this moment, as we gather from Presbyterial reports, there are not fewer than eighty ministers required for as many settlements, prepared to exert themselves to the utmost to support divine ordinances among them. But it is not in our power to make any reply to them, save "we have not the means of assisting you; we are not able to persuade preachers to leave their native country and share your privations in these wilds; we can now cherish little hope for you, or for your children, that you shall abide in the good old paths, unless we shall succeed in raising up among yourselves those who shall serve in the temple of God." Brethren, we think it of high importance to fix your attention on this state of things, that we may, through the divine blessing, persuade many parents among you, to consecrate a son to the ministry. But in the meantime, a previous step must be taken; a previous oblation must be made. You must provide the funds to endow a college for their education. According to the sound views entertained among us, none should be invested with this office, but those who have been competently instructed. To provide instructors of the greatest ability, we have requested the General Assembly's Colonial Committee, to nominate and appoint without delay, a principal of the college, and one professor. We are assured, that whoever may be appointed to this office will enjoy the confidence of the Parent Church, and will also merit and secure yours. But we cannot hope to draw men of learning and talent from the sweet attractions of home, and from other important spheres of ministerial labor, unless we secure to them a suitable maintenance. For this we call upon you, not merely for your own liberal donations, but for your entire countenance and support, in whatever way it may be wanted. Let us fulfil our part: we have the fullest confidence that the General Assembly's Committee will fulfil theirs; and that the appointments which they are authorised to make to the chairs of our Canadian College, will secure for it an honorable name, and cause its influence to be beneficially felt throughout this whole continent.

What mighty effects, for good or for ill, though we choose on this occasion, rather to contemplate the good, are often produced in the affairs of men by one or two master spirits! One poor German monk made the throne of ancient spiritual tyranny totter, even in an age when it seemed most securely established, and originated that reformation through which so many millions are now reaping the blessed fruits of pure religion and enlightened liberty: and his mind received its impulse and direction from a dusty Bible, which by accident, he found

in the library of his convent. To the large spirit and christian philanthropy of John Knox, Scotland is mainly indebted for her parochial churches and schools, through which she presents at this day a spectacle of civil and religious well-being, to which there are few parallels; (*Note C.) and his mind was bent to that path of inquiry, which led to his renunciation of a corrupted faith; and anon to that course of energetic action, by which he was distinguished as a reformer and patriot, by one of his preceptors in the University of St. Andrews. Those alone who have attended on the pleadings of eminent men are able to appreciate the power which they exert on the character of their pupils, and the indefinite multiplication of that power upon the community, when these pupils are dispersed to mingle in its affairs. If our college shall be conducted by such men as we could with pleasure name, and be frequented by youth of talents and piety, who shall in turn instruct and elevate the people to be committed to their care, what noble reward can we aspire after? The oriental proverb pronounces him to be a benefactor and blessed, who plants a tree by the way-side for the shelter of the weary traveller: what honor shall we heap upon his name, whose beneficence has brought forth, perhaps from the shades of obscure and humble life, even one man, whose doctrine and example will counteract the ignorance and irreligion of his time, and diffuse over the dark scene of human life, the soothing radiance of heavenly hope, that reperes the sufferer for the immortality to which it points. It would surely be difficult to discover, among all that has attracted the plaudits of mankind, any thing more deserving of long-lived remembrance than the labors of the learned, and the beneficence of the good crowned with such results. Such considerations should lead us to attach the highest importance to those institutions, over which eminent men preside, to direct the studies and form the characters of such as are to enlighten and guide their age: and every care should be taken, and no expense spared to procure instructors of the highest qualifications, of the greatest intellectual and moral energy, themselves the patterns of the excellence which they delineate, and the richest benefactors of the seats of learning which they adorn. No one doubts that our native land can furnish such instructors. And though our greatest liberty will furnish them only a scanty income, we nevertheless cherish the hope, that neither this, nor the comparatively narrow and obscure sphere to which talent is here confined, will doom us to the services of mediocrity, or prevent us from obtaining men to fill those chairs, whose power shall be felt in forming the literary and religious character of this nascent empire.

We need say in this place, only a single word, in reference to the scite that has been determined on. It will readily be admitted, by all who are free from unreasonable bias, that Kingston is one of the most eligible places in Canada for a seminary of education. The town

is remarkable for its cleanliness and salubrity; the population already exceeds 4000; and its growth and prosperity may be predicted perhaps with certainty. The communication with it by Lake Ontario from above, by the river St. Lawrence from below, and by the Rideau Canal which passes through an extensive inland territory until it joins the Ottawa, destined ere long to be one of the greatest thoroughfares of the northern regions of Canada, render it easy of access from all quarters. It has been ascertained that suitable lots of ground for the erection of buildings can be purchased, within the town, or at a convenient distance from it.

We submit to you, brethren, this statement of our views on this important subject. Your own serious considerations of its claims will prove the most powerful persuasives to that liberality which the occasion demands. Conscientious men are not moved to alms-giving without a sufficient reason, and they are bounteons according to the exigence. Our manifest object in this undertaking is, to found an institution at which our young men may be trained in all polite and useful learning, and the church may prepare an adequate and perpetual supply of ministers, for her present wants and ever enlarging demands. Let us at least lay the foundation; and if need be, leave to the liberal minded of another age, to complete and beautify the structure. Thus has it been in most works of the same kind. But let the founders transmit with that to which they have given "a local habitation and a name," some fair and sweet memorial of the large charity by which they are actuated, that posterity may do us honor, who in unsettled and distempered times, and while not yet emerged from those toils and privations, which convert the forest into a fruitful field, had the spirit to found an institution for the liberal arts, the wisdom to create a conservative power in the sacred edifice, the elevation of sentiment to bestow pre-eminent care on that which is intellectual and imperishable in our nature, the divine love to prepare reapers for that harvest which is unto everlasting life. Let every contributor, when weighing with himself this important question, "to what extent is it my duty to support this undertaking?" keep these high motives in view, and he will not fail to devise liberal things.

While we embark in this design with a humble dependance on the favor and blessing of God, it gives us high satisfaction that we proceed at the same time under the auspices and encouragement of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In the last report of the committee for promoting the religious interests of Scottish Presbyterians in the British colonies, it is stated: "Another most important object connected with the Canadas, is the institution of a college for general and particularly theological education, in conformity to the principles of the Church of Scotland. It is beyond controversy that these provinces cannot continue to derive an adequate supply of ministers from this country, and that they must

be long dependent on foreign means of religion; and necessary that we, for private and public instructors, should be sending those to command a college in the city of Quebec. This object of your committee in the Assembly, they may be in the most interest of these and all the actual interest of the American Church, that their committee rendered us a Committee of the College and one to engage them in the college through.

This institution shall be appropriate to another church of our country, who can ever reverence the memory of the grand and noble in our hearts that we shall have our wish to see its adoption, a college in the land from all, are not it still feeding piety, as a benevolent brethren in Canada to solve, as the country, that

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Oh, how peaceful and happy ways be ours in its sanctuaries! The richest land of our habitat takes in the scriptural word England having spirit in a laudable Let us, the follow their eternity shine most worthy truth and co. Although a banner of the cross has waxed cold in the tens of heart and soul greater joy and gions a scion come a great

are long depend on their own resources for the means of religious instruction. It is therefore necessary that means be employed without delay, for providing them with well-informed instructors from among themselves, and furnishing those institutions by which they may command a high and sound education at home. This object has largely occupied the attention of your committee; and they cannot doubt that the Assembly will enjoin any committee whom they may be pleased to appoint, to persevere in the most strenuous efforts for promoting in these and all other respects the moral and spiritual interests of our brethren in the North American Colonies." In assured confidence that their cordial and effectual support will be rendered us, we have requested the Colonial Committee to appoint the principal of the college and one professor, without delay, and to engage them to solicit contributions for the college throughout the United Kingdom.

This institution, and the eminent men who shall be appointed to preside over it, will constitute another strong endearing tie to the church of our father land. Who can forget, who can ever cease to regard with affectionate reverence the land of his birth? Is there aught in the scenery on which we now gaze, however grand and beautiful it be, to obliterate from our hearts the fond remembrance of the scenes that we shall visit no more? Is it not rather our wish to create around us in this land of our adoption, a state as like as possible to that in the land from which we are exiled. And above all, are not its religious institutions dear to us, as still feeding the hallowed impressions of early piety, as a bond of spiritual fellowship with our brethren in Christ, which distance cannot dissolve, as the sweet pledge of rest in another country, that is an heavenly,

"Where the dispersed of Israel
Are gathered into one."

Oh, how fervently do we desire that the peaceful sabbath of our forsaken homes may always be ours, and the faithful ministrations of its sanctuaries, and the busy hum of its schools. The richest benefit of that change in the place of our habitation, ordained by him who determines its bounds, will arise from the part we take in the establishment of a pure creed and a scriptural worship. The pilgrim Puritans of England have indelibly impressed their faith and spirit on a large portion of this new continent. Let us, the partakers of a like precious faith, follow their example. When the light of eternity shines on us, this stands out the object most worthy to be achieved. Unity in the truth and combination in love, will achieve it. Although a few faithless ones have deserted the banner of the covenant, and the love of many has waxed cold, we have reason to rejoice in the tens of thousands who, with their whole heart and soul, still rally round it, to whom no greater joy could be than to plant in these regions a scion of the true church, that it may become a great tree, under which our remotest

descendants will find shelter and peace.

In conclusion, brethren, we beseech you to listen with candor, and to respond with prompt beneficence to those who may be appointed to call on you for donations. We are not insensible to the difficulties with which many of you have to combat, nor unaware of the temptations that beset you, to shew aside every thing that does not return an immediate profit in kind. We appeal, however, to your better principles, and on the grounds already set forth call on you to devote a just portion of your substance to secure a benefit for those whom you may never see. What is a community benefitted by increase of wealth, unless that wealth be made secure by the enlightened virtue of its people? What can fortune be but a curse to families sinking in the scale of intelligence and piety? It may furnish food for their embittered passions, but cannot augment their dignity and happiness. "We will and command," says one of the greatest of England's kings, "that all free-men of our kingdom whosoever, possessing two hides of land, shall bring up their sons in learning till they be fifteen years of age at least, that so they may be trained up to know God, to be men of understanding, and to live happily: for of a man that is born free and yet illiterate, we repute no otherwise than of a beast, or of a brainless body and a very so." Unless Canada provide such literary institutions for her free-men as are fitted to form and elevate their character, to lead them to the knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, our destiny may easily be foretold.

But we indulge no gloomy forebodings. We have no distrust of your willingness, and none of your power, when we require of you a larger exercise of liberality than we have ever before solicited for a general object. Our appeals to you cannot be seconded by those sympathetic excitements created in popular assemblies, by which avarice and selfishness are sometimes for a moment subdued, and led captive by a better spirit. We must meet you for the most part individually; we must deal with you in your retired and calm reflections; we must confide in your nobler sentiments, in your patriotic love for this your adopted country, which, unenlightened by schools, cannot enjoy peace or rise to distinction; in your inextinguishable regard for the institutions of your native land, which have gotten for it so honorable a name; in your own deep love for the gospel of the ever-blessed God, which requires that its messengers be enriched in all utterance and knowledge. Revolve in your most serious hour of reflection and prayer the claims we have submitted, and the proportionable offerings we ask from you. Your generous sacrifices will long be gratefully remembered by your fellow-christians and countrymen. Nor will the remembrance be forgotten, when the benefactor's name is corroded from the brass on which it was engraved; for God is not unfaithful that he should forget your work of

Letter to the Friends of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

faith and labor of love in our Lord Jesus Christ. We know that the subject of education has long engaged a full share of the public attention, and that the members of our own communion take a deep interest in it. Sustain us, brethren, with your well known energy in this attempt to promote it. Go on and prosper. We wait, listening for the shout of triumphant liberality from Kincardine to Sarnia, remembering, what we pray you always may remember, the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

ROBT. M'GILL,
Moderator of Synod.

NIAGARA, 5th Dec. 1839.

Note A.—That the Presbyterian population has not been overstated at 100,000, will appear from the general results of the census taken last year, under recent Act of the Legislature; these are as follow:—

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| Church of England,..... | 79,754 |
| { Church of Scotland, 39,517 | |
| Presbyterians { Presbyterians,..... | 78,383 |
| { Seceders,..... | 7,218 |
| Methodists of all sorts,..... | 61,033 |
| Roman Catholics,..... | 43,029 |
| Baptists,..... | 12,963 |
| Twenty-three other denominations,..... | 92,806 |
| No Profession,..... | 34,760 |
| | 332,733 |
| Deficiency as compared with the entire population, nearly 1-6th of the whole,..... | 67,558 |
| | 400,346 |

In reference to the Presbyterians, we have to remark that in several districts those belonging to the Church of Scotland have been classed under the generic name of Presbyterian. We have certain knowledge also, that from several townships, in which are large bodies of Presbyterians, no returns have been made. In making this statement, we do not mean to insinuate, that any blame is chargeable on the returning officers. But we are of opinion that the system that has been followed in taking this census, varying as it does in different districts, is loose and inaccurate, and that the results obtained are no more than a vague approximation to the actual numbers in the principal religious denominations. We fervently hope it will never be made the basis of any Legislative measure. By making due allowance for inaccuracies, and adding the Presbyterian population of Lower Canada, it will be evident that the number attached to Presbyterianism in both provinces must exceed 100,000.

Note B.—We here give the following extract from the proceedings of the Commission of Synod, held at Hamilton on 8th Nov. last:—"The Commission proceeded to consider the business referred to them by the Synod, respecting the establishment of a College for the education of youth, and particularly for the education of candidates for the Holy Ministry, and had read the deliverance and instructions of Synod in regard to the same."—There was also produced and read, a letter from the Rev. Dr. Welsh, of Edinburgh, to the Rev. Dr. Cook, of Quebec, late Moderator, written by appointment of the Acting Committee of the General Assembly for promoting the religious interests of Presbyterian settlers in the British Colonies, in which it is intimated, that the Church of Scotland is most desirous that a University should be established in this colony, to secure, for Presbyterians therein, a complete course of education, and especially to afford opportunities to young men of promise, whose views are directed to the Holy Ministry, for attaining those literary, scientific, and theological acquirements required by the laws of the Church of all entrants into the sacred office, and offering in the meantime, and until such College shall be brought into operation, to grant bursaries to a certain number of young men, having views to the Ministry, and recommended by the Synod, during the whole period of their study at a Scottish University. Wherefore the Commission unanimously agreed

to record their grateful sense of the consideration with which the General Assembly's Committee have always met the views of the Synod, and especially on the present occasion, in their new declaration of their concurrence in regard to the establishment of a College, and in the liberality proffered of providing five bursaries, with a view to relieve, in some degree, distressing want of spiritual laborers in this portion of the field of Christ. Yet, inasmuch as previously to the receipt of the letter of Dr. Welsh, the Synod had resolved to encourage young men having views to the Ministry, to enter on a course of study, under the direction of Presbyteries in this country, and had also enjoined the Commission to apply to the Legislature of Upper Canada, during next Session, for an Act of incorporation for a College, and to proceed with all diligence, in such manner as they may deem best, in obtaining contributions for the establishment and support of such College. The Commission feel themselves bound to use their utmost exertions to carry out the measures contemplated by the Synod, being fully persuaded, at the same time, that the general interest of education in this province loudly call for such an institution, and that the wants and well-being of the Presbyterian Church render it indispensable that young men, designed for the Ministry, should be educated within the colony. The Commissioners, moreover, being fully aware that many parents, desirous of academical education for their sons, could not afford the expense of sending them to Scotland, and maintaining them at a University there, even if they could overcome the reluctance naturally felt, to be separated from their children, and taking into view, on the one hand, the utter inadequacy of any supply of preaching that could reasonably be expected in the colony by this arrangement, and the risk of frequent and serious disappointments, in regard to the bursars, which it involves; and, on the other, the number of destitute congregations and settlements already under our charge, and the late and rapid increase of the Presbyterian population, which we continue to expect through emigration from the parent state, agreed to record their deliberate and solemn conviction, that to admit any further delay in carrying into effect the measures contemplated by the Synod, would be a dereliction of a most sacred duty, and prove detrimental in the highest degree to the best interests of those for whom we are bound faithfully to watch, as those who must render an account unto the Judge of all.

Constrained by these considerations, and encouraged by the declarations made at different times on the part of the General Assembly, the Commission resolve, in the strength of God, to proceed forthwith to carry into effect, as far as possible, the intentions of the Synod in this matter; and with this view to make an immediate appeal to the liberality of the Church and the community at large in this colony, authorise the Moderator, in the meantime, to intimate to the Committee of the General Assembly our entire confidence in the support of our people, in reference to this object; and we purpose to set apart, in the first instance, and within six months of this date, the sum of five thousand pounds, to be invested in proper securities in the colony, for the endowment of one Theological Professorship, and earnestly to request that the Committee of the General Assembly will appropriate an equal sum, for the endowment of another Professorship, and thereafter look out for two Ministers, of suitable qualifications, who may be willing to accept of these Professorships in the Scottish Presbyterian College of Canada, and appoint them to the same; and farther, to suggest to the same Committee, the propriety of an immediate application to the Imperial Government in behalf of the College, and of the availing themselves of the aid of two Professors, who may be appointed during the period that may elapse between the time of their appointment and their departure from this country, to draw the attention of the Christian public in Scotland, and of our friends in England and Ireland, to the claims of this infant institution, and to use every exertion to collect funds, so that with the contributions that may be obtained in the colony, sufficient provision may be made for the efficiency of the institution, in the endowment of the necessary Professorships, and the erection of buildings, and the collection of a library and philosophical apparatus.

Note C.—Education diminishes crime in a state.—A comparative estimate of the state of crime in Ireland, England, Wales, and Scotland, taken on an average of seven years, ending 1818, is given as follows from the *London Christian Instructor*:—

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| Ireland,..... | 1 in every 1702 |
| England,..... | 1 1983 |
| Wales,..... | 1 8436 |
| Scotland,..... | 1 20,279 |

Hence it appears that according to the extent of the population there is a ratio of more than 10 to 1 in the commitments of England and Scotland, and of 11 to 1 in those of Ireland and Scotland, attributable in a great measure to the proportional deficiency of education and religious instruction in the two former countries.

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